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C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 01 OF 04 RPO DUBAI 000001

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SUBJECT: IRAN:MOUSAVI MESSAGE SPLITS PRINCIPLISTS?

CLASSIFIED BY: Alan Eyre, Director, DOS, IRPO; REASON: 1.4(B), (D)

11. (C) SUMMARY: On January 1 Green Path Opposition (GPO) leader Mir Hossein Mousavi issued his 17th declaration, titled "The Events of Ashura and the Following Days." Decrying Ashura-day regime brutality and describing as futile government efforts to end the current crisis via mass arrests and suppression, he proposed a five point solution, to include creating a fair and transparent election law, freeing all political prisoners, instituting press freedom and recognizing the peoples' right to gather and to form political associations and parties. Noticeably, he did not call for the abrogation of the June election and said that the Majlis and Judiciary should deal with the Ahmadinejad administration within the framework of the Constitution. Some moderate Principlists such as Mohsen Rezai expressed support for Mousavi's letter, while Principlists associated with President Ahmadinejad denounced both Mousavi, and Rezai for supporting him. As one prominent Iranian political analyst expressed to IRPO, this latest Mousavi letter seems designed primarily to foster division within Iran's ruling factions and to allow whatever moderates there are left more ammunition in supporting Mousavi and working against Ahmadinejad.
END SUMMARY.

12. (U) On Friday, January 1 Green Path Opposition (GPO) leader Mir Hossein Mousavi issued his 17th Declaration, on "The Events of Ashura and the Following Days." Decrying Ashura-day regime brutality and describing as futile government efforts to end the current crisis via mass arrests and suppression, he proposed a five point solution, adding that movement towards fulfilling any one of these points could help considerably in fostering unity. The five proposals were:

- (1) 'ANNOUNCING THE DIRECT RESPONSIBILITY OF THE EXECUTIVE BRANCH IN RELATION TO THE NATION, THE MAJLIS, AND THE JUDICIARY...' such that it is not given unusual support in the face of its weaknesses and shortcomings, and it is directly accountable for the problems it is creating for the nation. If the Administration is effective and deserving it will be able to answer the people and the Majlis and if it is inefficient and insufficient, the Majlis and the Judiciary can deal with it within the Constitutional framework."

- (2) CREATING A TRANSPARENT AND CONFIDENCE-CREATING ELECTION LAW

- (3) FREEING ALL POLITICAL PRISONERS AND RESTORING THEIR REPUTATIONS

- (4) FREEDOM OF PRESS/MEDIA AND ALLOWING PRINTING OF NEWSPAPERS THAT HAVE BEEN SHUT DOWN

- (5) OFFICIALLY RECOGNIZING THE PEOPLES' RIGHTS FOR LEGAL GATHERINGS, FORMATION OF PARTIES AND OTHER GROUPS, AND OBSERVANCE OF ARTICLE 27 OF THE CONSTITUTION [NOTE: Article 27 [Freedom of Assembly]: 'Public gatherings and marches may be freely held, provided arms are not carried and that they are not detrimental to the fundamental principles of Islam.']

13. (U) Other highlights of Mousavi's statement included:

- ADMINISTRATION'S CORRUPTION, ECONOMIC INABILITY: Mousavi condemned corruption 'arising from bad policies and lack of planning... We are ready to show...that today the rights and interests of the oppressed and workers and laborers and other classes of the nation are being drowned in one great corruption...the Twenty Year National Plan, approved by all parts of the System, today has become a worthless scrap of paper.'

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- ATTACK ON 'IRGC INC:': Mousavi called for the IRGC to withdraw from its economic activities: '...if a great and powerful institution like the Sepah-e Pasdaran is calculating the rising and falling of stock shares every day, it cannot defend the nation and the nation's interests. It itself becomes corrupt and also draws the country into corruption.'

ASHURA VIOLENCE/EXCESSES: Mousavi condemned the indiscriminate violence of regime security forces on Ashura, saying that whatever excesses and 'desecrations' there were on the part of some protestors, they were in reaction to regime brutality, which was 'the worst type of desecration.'

- FUTILITY OF REPRESSION AND DECAPITATING OPPOSITION: Mousavi said that while arrests, violence and suppression might bring temporary quiet, it won't solve the root causes of the crisis. Similarly, 'an order to execute, kill or imprison Karrubi, Mousavi or our like won't solve anything.'

- GPO'S ISLAMIC/NATIONALIST ROOTS: Mousavi denied foreign control or influence on the GPO: 'I stress the Islamic and nationalistic identity of the GPO, our fealty to the Constitution, and our opposition to the dominance of foreigners [aka the West].... We are not American or British [i.e. pro-American, pro-British]. We have not send cards of congratulations to the leaders of the great powers [NOTE: a dig at Ahmadinejad and his congratulatory letter to President Obama], nor do we have hopes of their help.'

MODERATE OSULIS: MAYBE

14. (U) Reaction to Mousavi's statement among Iran's ruling "Principlist" ('Osulgarayan') faction seemed split largely among the fault line between the Ahmadinejad wing and the so-called moderate wing (aligned with Ali Larijani, Mohsen Rezai and Tehran Mayor Mohammad Qalibaf). Initial signs indicated that the 'moderate

Osulgarayan wing' seemed either quiet or somewhat supportive of the Mousavi initiative. One of the main websites associated with this faction, Ayandeh news, posted Mousavi's letter without any negative editorializing. Anti-Ahmadinejad former Majlis conservative Emad Afrug wrote that it was a 'positive sign' in that Mousavi explicitly expressed his abhorrence for foreign powers such as the US or the UK and for 'sinister currents' such as the MEK; stressed the nationalist-Islamic nature of his efforts; and made explicit his commitment to work within the Constitution. Other public comments by both conservatives and others similarly noted Mousavi's 'compromises' in this statement.

REZAI BACKS MOUSAVI STATEMENT

15. (U) More significantly, that same day (June 1) Expediency Council Secretary Mohsen Rezai made public his letter to the Supreme Leader in which he supported Mousavi's statement. Rezai wrote that 'Mousavi's retreat from denying [the legitimacy of] Ahmadinejad's administration and his constructive suggestion that the Majlis and Judiciary act according to their legal duties in terms of making the Administration accountable, although late, can serve as a movement unifying the protestors with others.' As such, he suggested Khamenei send a message or guidance [presumably in reaction to Mousavi's statement], which 'could be a new movement for unity, brotherhood, forgiveness and common sacrifice in society.' Rezai letter to the Supreme Leader Khamenei also made much of the December 30 pro-government demonstrations, which he

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wrote 'nullified the enemy's plans' and could 'serve as the start of a new initiative to move the country forward and end the confusions and ambiguities of the last few months.'

AHMADINEJAD OSULIS: NO

16. (U) Pro-Ahmadinejad conservatives were having none of it, expressing disapproval both for Mousavi's letter and more so for Rezai's endorsement of it. Kayhan's January 3 main headline read 'Mousavi's New Statement Copied from CIA, Mossad.' Prominent pro-Ahmadinejad Majlis representative Hamid Rasai lashed out at Rezai for asking Supreme Leader Khamenei to implement the wishes of 'the seditionist leaders,' while representative Hojjatoleslam Musavi Qorbani called Rezai's letter 'simplistic' and showing his 'lack of understanding of the current situation.' The website of the IRGC's political office 'Basirat' wrote a piece on the 'wave of criticism' by Iranian political activists in relation to Rezai's letter, and another one showing the similarities between Mousavi's statement and comments by President Obama. Pro-Ahmadinejad Majlis Representative Ruhollah Hosseini also criticized Rezai's letter, saying that seeking unity with seditionists is treason.'

MOUSAVI'S GOAL: DIVIDE OSULIS?

17. (C) A prominent US-based Iranian analyst made the following points to IRPO about Mousavi's letter [paraphrase follows]:

- Unlike many of Mousavi's pronouncements, this one was 'carefully worded' and didn't seek Ahmadinejad's removal over the election. It placed the responsibility of removing Ahmadinejad on Majles and the Judiciary 'if and when... the incompetence of the government becomes evident.'

- Mousavi sought to 'keep Khamenei out of the equation' by accepting his role constitutionally and yet giving him a way out of the crisis, which allowed Rezai to issue his statement;

- Obviously Mousavi knows that the hardliners and probably Khamenei will not accept his proposals but this statement was not written for them. It was intended to give Rafsanjani more room to maneuver from within (again Rezai's statement is significant here) and to find more allies within the regime. It was also intended to unarm the hardliners or at least give them less ammunition for attack, by affirming his commitment to Iran's constitution and by showing that Mousavi isn't seeking to bring down Khamenei and the system. In this manner the statement sought to increase the rift within the conservative faction. It is of course not clear it is going to work but it is an attempt to start a process of negotiation based on the argument that what has been done so far has proven disastrous to the Islamic Republic.

THROWING AHMADINEJAD

UNDER THE BUS?

18. (C) COMMENT: The paragraph seven analysis immediately above seems on the money, in that this latest Mousavi statement seems

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primarily a stratagem to divide the ruling Osulgarayan faction, provide more ammunition to Rafsanjani in his attempts to woo the as yet uncommitted elite, and to encourage the Supreme Leader if not to 'throw Ahmadinejad under the bus,' to allow the Majlis and other political players to continue to weaken his position. However, Mousavi's attack on IRGC economic interests in this latest statement seems to ensure that at least one large and important segment of those seeking to neutralize the GPO will remain unconvinced of the need for compromise. END COMMENT.
EYRE